



## FY2004 Performance Summary

Now in its fourth year of implementation, the National Fire Plan (NFP) represents a long-term commitment and investment that is helping protect communities, natural resources, and the lives of firefighters and the public. This long-term commitment is shared among federal agencies, states, local governments, tribes, and interested publics. Collaboration, accountability, and priority setting are the guiding principles that will ensure the continued success of the NFP.

Hazardous fuels reduction goals under the National Fire Plan can now be expedited through provisions of the Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI) and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA). Significant progress has been made through the use of these provisions to reduce hazardous fuels and improve land conditions. In Fiscal Year 2004, federal agencies used the HFI administrative tools on 564 projects covering 442,000 acres. Also during 2004, HFRA authorities were used on 60 projects covering 228,000 acres. Emphasis on collaboration and coordination are at the very core of the success realized through the four years of implementation of the NFP and the early stages of the HFI and the HFRA.

**Long Term Strategy, Long Term Implementation Plan** – Following the May 2002 signing of *A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment*, and the subsequent approval of its implementation plan, significant progress has been made in tackling the complex problems of wildland fire. Between May 2002 and December 2004, 75 percent, or 96 of the 128 action items set forth in the plan, were completed. Below is a summary of the funding appropriated to implement National Fire Plan goals and objectives:

### Summary of Appropriated Funding for the National Fire Plan\*

Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior, FY 2000-2004

(Dollars in thousands)

Agency	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003 <sup>^</sup>	FY 2004
USDA Forest Service	\$645,125	\$1,487,629	\$1,354,349	\$2,289,968	\$1,647,816
Department of the Interior	\$490,957	\$977,099	\$678,421	\$875,152	\$685,177
<b>NFP Total</b>	<b>\$1,136,082</b>	<b>\$2,464,728</b>	<b>\$2,032,070</b>	<b>\$3,129,120</b>	<b>\$2,396,993</b>

\*Funding levels do not include emergency suppression contingency funds.

<sup>^</sup>2003 figures include repayment for fire suppression costs.

The Western Governors Association (WGA) conducted a status summary of the 10-Year Implementation Plan. Their findings indicated that outstanding progress has been made on goals one and two, *Improving Fire Prevention and Suppression* and *Reducing Hazardous Fuels*. Their review highlighted a need to place additional emphasis on goals three and four, *Restoring Fire-adapted Ecosystems* and *Promoting Community Assistance*. A collaborative approach for updating the Implementation Plan is being prepared.

### **Increased Accountability**

In January 2004, the Wildland Fire Leadership Council commissioned the Strategic Issues Panel on Fire Suppression Costs to study the increasing costs of wildland fire suppression. The members of the panel included senior agency administrators, fire experts, tribal representatives, governors' representatives, and state and local government officials. The members were asked to look at a variety of fire suppression cost containment issues and barriers and their relationship to land and resource management planning. A report was presented to the Council in August, and feasibility studies for each of the cost containment proposals are now under way. The report can be viewed at **fireplan.gov** under the resources section.

### **Increased Contracting and Jobs**

Both the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service have established objectives to significantly increase the level of funds for contracting of hazardous fuels projects, emergency stabilization and rehabilitation, and firefighting preparedness and suppression. The five wildland firefighting agencies initiated approximately \$140 million in contractual actions and awarded 86 stewardship contracts in FY 2004.

## **FY 2004 Selected Accomplishments:**

**Firefighting Preparedness** - Provides the resources and infrastructure necessary to conduct fire and aviation management activities. Accomplishments include:

- Hired, trained, and maintained a firefighting workforce of over 16,000 personnel.
- Provided a firefighting fleet of 1,551 engines, 260 dozers and plows, 157 water/foam tenders, and 149 helicopters, among other equipment.
- Increased interagency fire training, with over 900 participants completing training.

**Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation** - Stabilization efforts focus on addressing post-fire emergency situations, such as erosion and possible floods. Rehabilitation efforts focus on improving lands that are unlikely to recover naturally from the effects of wildfires. Accomplishments include:

- Stabilized slopes with log structures, straw wattles, and straw mulch, and installed culverts and reseeded burned areas.
- Accomplished 657 rehabilitation projects on federal lands in 17 states, treating nearly 2.5 million acres.
- Completed more than 11,600 miles of trail reconstruction, roadwork, riparian enhancement, fencing, and boundary line location.

**Hazardous Fuels Reduction** – Using prescribed fire, mechanical thinning, grazing, or a combination of these methods, a record amount of federal and adjacent land was made less prone to the impacts of wildfire. Accomplishments include:

- A record 4.2 million acres of federal land and adjacent lands were treated, 2.4 million acres of which were in wildland/urban interface (WUI) areas.

- 719,000 acres were treated by mechanical means; 2.3 million acres were treated with prescribed fire.
- 120,000 acres were treated through Wildland Fire Use (WFU).
- Of the total acres treated, 1.1 million acres were treated for other reasons, and reduced fuels levels as a secondary benefit.

**Community Assistance** – Provided grants for states and local fire agencies to increase fire protection capabilities and increase their ability to support federal agencies’ firefighting needs. Most grants require matching funds, which increases the value and scope of federal funding. Accomplishments include:

- Assisted over 14,000 communities with risk assessment plans, fuels treatments, development of local fire departments’ capacity, and wildfire preparedness.
- Increased firefighting capacity by providing technical assistance, training, supplies, equipment, and public education support to 8,752 volunteer fire departments and 1,848 rural fire departments.
- Reached approximately 2,500 people through national-level Firewise workshops. Another 60 one-day spin-off workshops drew approximately 2,000 more participants representing about 40 communities.

**Research** – Three different organizations provide research for federal wildland fire management, including the Joint Fire Science Program, Forest Service Research and Development, and the U.S. Geological Survey. Accomplishments include:

- With support from NFP funding, 72 Forest Service research teams studied aspects of wildland fire management including firefighter and public safety, fire weather and behavior, smoke dispersion, and post-fire susceptibility to invasive species.